

The Effects Of Parenting Styles On College Students' Leadership At Vocational And Technical College In Guangxi

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Abstract—This study investigates the impact of parenting styles (rejection, emotional warmth, and overprotection) on leadership development among vocational college students in Guangxi, China, while examining the moderating effects of demographic factors. Using a quantitative approach, 254 first-year nursing students from Guangxi Talent International College were selected through purposive sampling. Data was collected using the Simplified Parenting Style Scale (S-EMBU) and Adolescent Leadership Questionnaire. Descriptive statistics revealed high overall leadership levels ($M=4.38$, $SD=0.91$), with emotional warmth being the most prevalent parenting style ($M=3.32$). Independent samples t -tests showed no significant leadership differences based on gender, age, residence, or singleton status ($p > 0.05$). Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that emotional warmth positively predicted leadership ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.001$), while rejection ($\beta=-0.18$) and overprotection ($\beta=-0.12$) were significant negative predictors ($p<0.001$). The model explained 42% of leadership variance ($R^2=0.42$). Findings indicate parental emotional support is crucial for leadership development, whereas controlling behaviors inhibit it. We recommend family education programs and curriculum reforms to foster democratic parenting practices and optimize leadership cultivation in vocational education.

Keywords— Parenting styles; Leadership development; Vocational students; Emotional warmth

I. INTRODUCTION (HEADING 1)

Leadership development has become a strategic priority in global vocational education reform, recognized as essential for students' professional adaptability and career advancement (Kouzes & Posner, 2014). China's vocational education system serves over 16 million students, yet leadership cultivation remains secondary to technical skill training,

creating an imbalance in holistic competency development (Chen et al., 2015). Extensive research confirms that family environments serve as primary socialization arenas for leadership development, with Baumrind's (1966) tripartite parenting model—comprising rejection, emotional warmth, and overprotection—fundamentally shaping psychological traits underlying leadership behaviors (Steinberg et al., 2006).

China's unique socio-cultural context, characterized by the historical one-child policy and urban-rural disparities, has fostered paradoxical parenting patterns blending authoritarian control with indulgent practices (Zhang, 2016). Vocational students predominantly come from rural counties where parents often have limited education, potentially influencing leadership development through self-efficacy pathways (Li, 2014). Despite this, critical research gaps persist: (1) predominant focus on university students neglects vocational cohorts' distinct characteristics; (2) limited empirical evidence establishes causal links between parenting dimensions and leadership outcomes.

This study focuses on vocational college students in Guangxi to address three core questions: 1. Do demographic variables (gender, place of origin, etc.) influence leadership development? 2. How do different parenting approaches predict leadership growth? 3. How can educational interventions be optimized based on these findings? By filling gaps in vocational education research, this study provides theoretical foundations for establishing a "family-school collaboration" leadership development model. It offers practical pathways to enhance the quality of technical and skilled talent under the rural revitalization strategy.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Conceptualizing Leadership

Leadership theory has evolved from trait-based to process-oriented paradigms. We adopt Kouzes and Posner's (2010) operational definition: Leadership is an individual's behavioral capacity to guide team members toward shared goals, encompassing three dimensions measured by the Adolescent Leadership Questionnaire ($\alpha=0.923$): Decision-making ("I am skilled at organizing group activities"), Influence ("Peers want me to lead activities"), Coordination ("I resolve team disagreements effectively"). In vocational contexts, leadership manifests practically through project teams and skill-based collaborations (Weng, 2013).

B. Parenting Styles Framework

Building upon the integration model proposed by Darling and Steinberg (1993), this study examines three dimensions. The first is emotional warmth, where parents establish supportive relationships through encouragement and empathy (e.g., "My parents are proud of my success"). The second is rejection, which involves denying children's emotional needs and self-worth (e.g., "My parents publicly criticize me"). The third dimension is overprotection, characterized by restricting children's autonomy in decision-making (e.g., "My parents interfere in everything I do"). Scale reliability was confirmed (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.872-0.901$; see Table 1).

TABLE I. RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY METRICS

Construct	Dimension	Cronbach's α	KMO	Factor Loadings
Leadership	-	0.923	0.891	0.73-0.88
Parenting Styles	Emotional Warmth	0.901	0.902	0.71-0.86
	Rejection	0.872	0.843	0.68-0.82
	Overprotection	0.842	0.821	0.65-0.79

C. Demographic characteristics significantly influence leadership capability

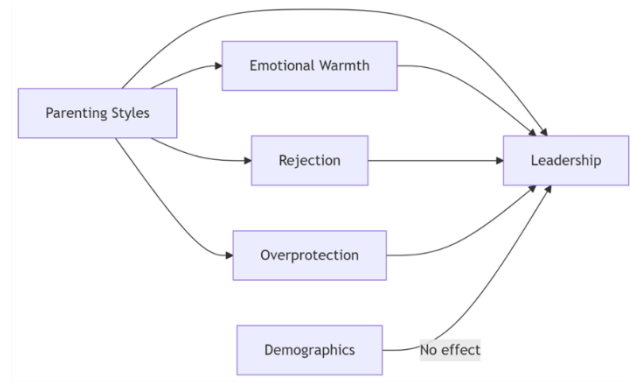
- Demographic characteristics significantly influence leadership capability
- H1a: Gender affects leadership levels, with males showing higher leadership propensity (Dugan, 2006)
- H1b: Urban students exhibit stronger leadership than rural peers due to resource advantages (Lin & Li, 2005)
- H1c: Only children demonstrate superior leadership from focused parental investment (Li, 2014)
- H1d: Parental education level positively correlates with student leadership

- H1e: Age influences leadership through cognitive maturity pathways.

D. Parenting styles significantly predict leadership development

- H2a: Emotional warmth enhances leadership through self-efficacy reinforcement
- H2b: Rejection inhibits leadership by undermining psychological security
- H2c: Overprotection impedes leadership by restricting autonomy development.

Figure 1. Research Framework (Independent variable: three dimensions of parenting style; dependent variable: leadership; control variables: demographic factors)



a. Figure 1: Conceptual Model

III. RESEARCH METHODS

A cross-sectional quantitative design was implemented. Through purposive sampling, 254 first-year nursing students were recruited from Guangxi Talent International College (male=123, female=131; rural=92%). Sample size satisfied GPower 3.1 requirements for medium effect size ($f^2=0.15$) at 95% power ($\alpha=0.05$).

- Simplified Parenting Style Scale (21 items; 4-point Likert scale).
- Adolescent Leadership Questionnaire (8 items; 5-point Likert scale).
- Demographic Survey (gender, age, residence, etc.).

A. Participants

Reliability/Validity: Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$; KMO > 0.8 ; EFA cumulative variance=68.3%. 2. Descriptive Analysis: Means, standard deviations, frequency distributions. 3. Inferential Testing: Independent samples t-tests (gender, residence, singleton status), One-way ANOVA (age groups, parental education), Multiple regression (parenting dimensions predicting leadership). SPSS 25.0 was used with a significance threshold $\alpha=0.05$.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Analysis Results

Descriptive Statistics.

Participants demonstrated high leadership ($M=4.38$, $SD=0.91$). Emotional warmth was predominant ($M=3.32$), while rejection was least frequent ($M=1.88$) (Table 2).

TABLE II. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (N=254)

Variable	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Leadership	4.38	0.91	-0.32	0.85
Emotional Warmth	3.32	0.89	-0.41	0.92
Rejection	1.88	0.99	1.05	1.17
Overprotection	2.48	0.96	0.27	-0.33

2. Hypothesis Testing

H1 Results (Demographics).

t-tests revealed non-significant effects for. Gender ($t= -1.21$, $p=0.23$), Residence ($t= -0.65$, $p=0.52$), Singleton status ($t=1.89$, $p=0.06$), ANOVA showed non-significant age group differences ($F=0.88$, $p=0.56$).

TABLE III. DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS

Variable	Group	n	M	SD	t/F	p
Gender	Male	123	4.32	0.81	-1.21	0.23
	Female	131	4.51	0.88		
Residence	Rural	234	4.47	0.81	-0.65	0.52
	Urban	20	4.60	0.88		

H2 Results (Parenting Styles)

Hierarchical regression ($R^2=0.42$, $F=15.73$) confirmed. Emotional warmth positively predicted leadership ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.001$), Rejection ($\beta=-0.18$, $p<0.001$), and overprotection ($\beta=-0.12$, $p<0.001$) were negative predictors.

TABLE IV. REGRESSION ANALYSIS: PARENTING DIMENSIONS PREDICTING LEADERSHIP

Predictor	β	SE	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	2.14	0.32	6.72	<0.001	-
Emotional Warmth	0.35	0.06	5.83	<0.001	1.18
Rejection	-0.18	0.04	-4.50	<0.001	1.15
Overprotection	-0.12	0.03	-4.00	<0.001	1.22

DISCUSSION

Three key insights emerge from the findings:

1. **Demographic Paradox:** Contrary to Dugan (2006), female students showed marginally higher leadership ($M=4.51$ vs. 4.32), potentially reflecting nursing education's female-dominated context that neutralizes traditional gender constraints. Rural-urban leadership differences were non-significant ($\Delta M=0.13$), suggesting vocational education's equalizing effect.

2. **Dual Nature of Parenting:** Emotional warmth's strong positive impact ($\beta=0.35$) supports Zou's (2019) "supportive environment" theory, where affirmation builds leadership identity. Conversely, overprotection's negative effect ($\beta=-0.12$) exposes risks in China's "high-control/high-investment" parenting model—restricted decision-making opportunities impair autonomy development (Wang, 2020).

3. **Vocational Education's Mediating Role:** Unlike universities, vocational leadership develops through applied contexts (e.g., nursing team simulations), explaining why parental education ($*p*=0.169$) and other background factors showed limited impact. This validates Li's (2014) compensatory mechanism hypothesis, where school experiences offset familial disadvantages.

CONCLUSION

This study establishes empirical evidence that parenting styles significantly impact leadership development among Guangxi vocational students: emotional warmth serves as a core facilitator, while rejection and overprotection function as barriers. Notably, demographic factors (gender, residence, etc.) showed no significant effects, highlighting vocational education's role in fostering equitable development opportunities.

Theoretical Contributions

- Validates parenting dimensions' applicability to vocational cohorts, confirming emotional warmth's cross-cultural efficacy.
- Exposes overprotection's culturally-specific negative effects in China's collectivist context.
- Challenges "urban-rural determinism" by revealing education's compensatory potential.

Practical Implications

- Family Interventions:** Conduct democratic parenting workshops teaching emotional responsiveness skills, and distribute evidence-based parenting guides for vocational student families.
- Institutional Strategies:** Integrate leadership modules into practical courses (e.g., rotating team leader systems), and establish family-school alliances sharing behavioral observation records.
- Policy Recommendations:** Incorporate parenting quality metrics into vocational education evaluations, and create rural revitalization funds supporting parental education programs.

Limitations and Future Research

The sample limitation to nursing students warrants expansion to engineering/business disciplines. Longitudinal designs should track parenting's long-term career impacts. Qualitative

investigations could explore cultural nuances in parenting-leadership dynamics.

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